

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 1680

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR PFOR KS KN

SUBJECT: ROK/NK FISHING PATTERN IN YELLOW SEA

REF: STATE 53501

1. THE DISCUSSION OF FISHING PATTERNS IN THE FOLLOWING
PARAGRAPH REQUESTED REFTTEL EXCLUDES FISHING BY SMALL OPEN BOATS ON A
DIURNAL BASIS IN THE IMMEDIATE COASTAL AREA, AND ALSO
THE DISTANT WATERS FISHERMEN, WHO OPERATE IN SUCH AREAS
AS THE BERING AND SOUTH CHINA SEAS.

2. ROK FISHERMEN CATCH A NUMBER OF SPECIES OF FISH;
HOWEVER THERE ARE EIGHT TYPES WHICH CONSTITUTE THE BULK
OF THE CATCH TAKEN IN KOREAN COASTAL WATERS. THESE ARE
SQUID (CUTTLEFISH), YELLOW CORVINA (CHOGIE), ANCHOVY,
HAIR TAIL (SABER FISH), PIKE (PACIFIC SAURY), ALASKA
POLLACK, MACKEREL (ALL TYPES), AND SHRIMP.

3. THE PRINCIPAL FISHING METHODS EMPLOYED ARE: HAND-
LINE, DRIFT-LINE (LONG LINE), STOW NET, GILL NET, PURSE
SEINE, DANISH SEINE (ANCHOVY), AND TRAWLING.

4. THE SIZE OF COASTAL FISHING BOATS RANGE FROM ABOUT
4 TONS TO 20 TONS, OF WOOD OR METAL CONSTRUCTION, AND
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ENGINES FROM 40 HP TO 200HP. THE AVERAGE WOODEN VESSEL

BEING 4.9 GROSS TONS AND STEEL-HULLED 13.4 GROSS TONS.

5. MAJOR FISHING GROUNDS ARE MAINLY DETERMINED BY WHERE THE FISH ARE IN THEIR MIGRATORY PATTERN AT A GIVEN TIME OF THE YEAR, BUT, THEY ARE ALSO DETERMINED BY THE LOCATIONS OF CENTERS OF POPULATION AND COMMERCE. ALL THINGS BEING EQUAL, MORE FISHING BOATS, ESPECIALLY SHORT-RANGE ONES OF THE TYPE WHICH ABOUND IN KOREA, WILL BE FOUND OPERATING NEAR POPULATION CENTERS.

6. MIGRATORY PATTERNS OF FISH CAN BE CORRELATED TO SEASONAL VARIATIONS IN WATER TEMPERATURE. THIS MIGRATION IS A SMOOTH FLOW. ANY ABNORMALITY SUCH AS SEVERE ICE CONDITIONS OR TYPHOONS, WHICH VARIES WATER TEMPERATURE IN THE KOREAN AREA, WILL CAUSE THIS MIGRATORY PATTERN TO CHANGE. THUS IN WINTER, THE MAIN ROK FISHING BOAT CONCENTRATIONS ARE MORE PRONOUNCED OFF THE SOUTH EASTERN, SOUTH AND SOUTH WESTERN COAST, AND IN SPRING THEY MOVE NORTH, TOWARDS THE AREA OFF INCHON IN THE WEST AND TOWARD THE VICINITY OF KANGNUNG IN THE EAST. THE NK BOATS FOLLOW A SIMILAR PATTERN. THAT IS, EARLY AND LATE IN THE YEAR, THEY ARE FOUND CLOSE DOWN TO THE NORTHERN PATROL LIMIT LINE BECAUSE THERE ARE MORE FISH THERE, AND MOVE NORTH DURING THE SUMMER. BECASUE OF THE DEMANDS OF THE POPULATION CENTERS, NUMEROUS BOATS WILL BE FOUND IN ANY OF THE AREAS AT ANY TIME OF YEAR, BUT THE DENSITY WILL VARY AS INDICATED. BECAUSE OF LACK OF REFREIGERATION ON THESE BOATS, VERY FEW FISH MORE THAN 75 MILES FROM THE COAST. ADDITIONALLY, BECAUSE OF PAST PROBLEMS VERY FEW BOATS OF EITHER SIDE FISH OUTSIDE THE AREA WERE THEY ARE PROTECTED BY THEIR OWN PATROLS. JAPANESE AND PRC BOATS FISH ON THEIR RESPECTIVE SIDES OF THE PENINSULA, OUTSIDE THE 12 MILE LINE, WITHOUT INTERFERENCE BY THE ROK; AND USUALLY WITHOUT INTERFERENCE BY THE NK.

7. PRIOR TO THE 26 FEB 1975 INCIDENT THERE WERE NO KNOWN INSTANCES OF EITHER THE ROK OR NK BOATS FISHING IN THE HIGH SEAS BEYOND THE CONTIGUOUS WATERS OF THE OTHER SIDE IN EITHER SEA, EXCEPT FOR AN OCCASIONAL CASE
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OF STRAYING SUCH AS THE SU WON HO 32 AND 33 IN FEB 1974.

8. TO AVOID A CLASH BETWEEN NK AND ROK FISHING BOATS AND BECAUSE OF INCIDENTS INVOLVING SEIZURE OF ROK BOATS WHICH WENT NORTH IN ATTEMPTS TO FOLLOW THESE MIGRATIONS, A FISHING LIMIT LINE WAS ESTABLISHED BY ROK LAW IN THE 1950'S. ON THE WEST COAST THE LINE WAS LAT 37-30N TO THE EAST OF LON 124-45E AND 37-50N

TO THE WEST. ON THE EAST COAST, THE LINE WAS 38-37N. DUE TO THE TENSION AND THE SINKING OF TWO BOATS BETWEEN SEPT 1973 AND FEB 1974, THE LINE WAS MOVED SOUTH TO 37-20N ON THE WEST COAST AND 38-30N ON THE EAST COAST. THE ROK GOVERNMENT AGENCIES INVOLVED AGREED TO ENFORCE THE SOUTHERN LINE BUT THIS LINE WAS NOT PUBLICLY ANNOUNCED FOR POLITICAL REASONS. THIS LINE CREATES A BUFFER ZONE THAT ENABLES ROKN/KNP PATROLS TO KEEP THE FISHING BOATS WELL TO THE SOUTH. THE NORTH IS KNOWN TO USE A SIMILAR SYSTEM TO KEEP THEIR BOATS NORTH OF LAT 38-03 ON THE WEST AND 38-40 ON EAST.

9. TO PRECLUDE INDIVIDUAL BOATS FROM STRAYING NORTH THE ROK FISHING FLEETS ARE ORGANIZED IN THE FOLLOWING MANNER: EVERY FOUR BOATS HAVE A GROUP LEADER RESPONSIBLE FOR KEEPING THEM IN VISUAL CONTACT NIGHT AND DAY. THIS GROUP LEADER MAINTAINS CONTINUAL RADIO CONTACT WITH THE ROKG FISHERIES COMMISSION COMMUNICATIONS ASHORE, AND THE NEAREST KNP UNIT PATROLLING HIS AREA AT SEA. HE MUST REPORT HIS CURRENT POSITION TWICE A DAY TO HQ. THE KNP UNITS ARE UNDER DIRECT OPERATIONAL CONTROL OF THE ROK NAVAL UNITS PATROLLING THEIR RESPECTIVE SECTOR. THE KNP UNITS HAVE CONSTANT COMMUNICATION WITH THE KNP HQ ASHORE AND WITH THE NEAREST ROKN PATROL UNIT. THE ROK NAVAL UNITS HAVE COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE KNP HQ AND ROKN SECTOR COMMANDER ASHORE AND THE KNP BOATS AT SEA. IF ANY TROUBLE DEVELOPS WITH NK UNITS, OR ANY POSSIBLE INTRUDERS INTO ROKG WATERS, THERE IS AN EMERGENCY RADIO CIRCUIT THAT ALL OT UNITS AND HQ'S DISCUSSED CAN UTILIZE.

10. PRESENTLY THERE ARE APPROXIMATELY 320 FISHING BOATS LICENSED TO FISH IN THE SEA OF JAPAN, NEAR THE
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NORTHERN LIMIT AND APPROXIMATELY 110 BOATS SIMILARLY LICENSED IN THE YELLOW SEA. THESE GROUPS ARE MONITORED BY AN AVERAGE OF 5 ROKN COMBATANTS IN THE WEST AND 3 COMBATANTS IN THE EAST. THESE ARE AUGMENTED BY AN AVERAGE OF 9 LARGE KNP PATROL BOATS ALONG THE EAST COAST AND AN AVERAGE OF 8 ALONG THE WEST COAST. AS A FURTHER PRECAUTION EVERY FISHING BOAT IS EQUIPPED WITH AN EASILY UNDERSTOOD CHART OF THEIR AREA WITH THE LIMIT LINES CLEARLY MARKED. IN ADDITIO, EACH FISHING BOAT MASTER IS TESTED ON THESE REGULATIONS EVERY SIX MONTHS, AND IS CERTIFIED IN WRITING BY THE KNP.

11. THERE ARE NO AREAS WHERE THE NK AND ROK FISHING FLEETS INTERMINGLE. THIS IS DUE TO THE VIGOROUS PATROL ACTIONS BY EACH SIDE TAKEN TO PRECLUDE THIS

SITUATION FROM OCCURRING.

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